California Forest and Range Experiment Station, Berkeley 1, Calif.

TO   : GEORGE S. JAMES, U. S. Forest Service   April 17, 1956
          Division of I&E, San Francisco

FROM   : GEORGE M. JEMISON, Director

SUBJECT: R-CAL INFORMATION, General

You will remember that some time ago we discussed the possibility
of distributing to all forest supervisors copies of a simple
library classification requested from the Station by Supervisor
Stathem of the Shasta-Trinity National Forest.

We have put together a system that looks fairly practical. A
copy of the classification system and an explanation of its use
are enclosed. You may copy and distribute it in any way you
prefer.

                                        /s/ Geo. M. Jemison

Enclosures

cc: Paul Stathem.
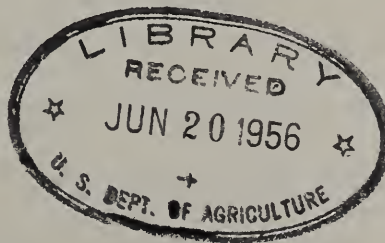
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A CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM FOR NATIONAL-FOREST STAFF LIBRARIES

As forestry gets more complex, forest experiment stations receive more and more requests that start "Can you recommend a simple system for . . . ." Usually the answer starts, "No, but. . ." and the research worker shudders as he plunges into a simplification of what he considers a beautifully complex field of study. A recent request of this type was for a simplified classification system to use in setting up and maintaining a library in a forest supervisor's office. This is an attempt to answer that request.

What I set out to do first of all was to find a fairly simple plan. To do the job, I borrowed shamelessly from "The Oxford System of Classification for Forestry," published by the Commonwealth Agricultural Bureau, Farnham Royal, England, and from a classification scheme for research libraries developed by the Intermountain Forest and Range Experiment Station. And then I picked the brains of some staff men at this Station. Simplicity usually means few divisions. The best I could come up with was a number system consisting of eight primary headings with four to eight secondary headings for each.

Secondly, I wanted a comprehensive system; that is, to provide a slot for most any pamphlet or report a forest supervisor's staff would like to file. This meant fairly broad groupings. Miss Mary L. Eakin, librarian at the University of California School of Forestry, graciously reviewed the plan and suggested valuable revisions. She said she found that the classifications provided a slot for most forestry materials she receives. So I concluded that the scope was adequate and the system worth trying.

Finally, I wanted a plan that could be expanded to suit local conditions without too much strain. Consequently the system sticks to primary and secondary divisions and leaves third-order categories to be set up locally. This ought to work out all rights, but the proof of this pudding is definitely in the eating.

HOW TO USE THE SYSTEM

CLASSIFYING library materials should be the responsibility of the technical staff. It should not be turned over to the clerical staff, for a good deal of professional knowledge is usually required to decide which category best fits a particular report. Besides, if a report is worth filing, it ought to be worth at least one quick reading by a staff man, and he can easily assign the appropriate classification at that time.

"Miscellaneous" or "General" second-order headings were purposely omitted from the system. They make it too easy to avoid classifying an article. Reports covering an entire field, like all phases of timber management, or ones so general that they cannot properly be assigned to a specific second-order number, should carry only the first-order numbers in their categories.

CROSS-REFERENCING is essential for best use of the system. This is not to say that every item must be cross-referenced, but most reports that cover more than one topic ought to be. For example, a general article classified under "4. Watershed Management" may contain useful information on road design. It could be cross-referenced under both "26. Logging and engineering," and "46. Erosion control," to help a man looking for information on how to build erosion-proof roads.

FILING can be done in many ways, but the commonest methods probably will be in pamphlet boxes or looseleaf binders. A single box or binder for each primary heading may sometimes be enough, but using several boxes and grouping a few secondary headings in each will usually be best. In any event, some kind of dividers should be used to separate the second-order items. Otherwise, you mights as well toss the pamphlets in an apple box and fish for the one you want.

Articles bearing only the first order number should be filed in their own, preferably the first, compartment of the pamphlet box or loose-leaf binder. Cross-referencing under appropriate second-order headings will make it possible to find useful specific information in these general publications.

FINDING material in library files is greatly simplified by a card index of authors, titles, and subjects. But the supervisor who can afford a comprehensive card index is a rare bird--or has married a librarian and put her on his staff without pay! Even a card index by subjects alone would be helpful. As a minimum aid to finding a particular article, however, a cross-reference card or sheet can be inserted at the proper place in the pamphlet box or binder. (For boxes, a stiff, pamphlet-size colored card is better than a sheet of paper.) For example, you might have two or three articles about erosion control on logging operations filed under logging and engineering. In the "46. Erosion control" compartment of watershed management, then, you would insert a sheet bearing the notation: "See also "26. Logging and engineering." It would be helpful to note the title and page number. Cross-reference sheets could also be used to record magazine articles or books not in the files but available elsewhere.

Some offices may want to be systematic about keeping track of
items removed from the files for a day or more. A sign-out card at-
tached to the bookcase is a relatively painless system; the card should
show title of publication, time out and returned, and borrower's name.

LABELLING is another way to help find things. And labels help
file properly, too. The reference number should be written on every
publication as soon as it is classified. If an article has information
useful in more than one field, the cross-reference numbers also should be
shown. Labelling can be done on the cover as follows:

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Ref. No. 26
 xno. 46, 34

            A GUIDE TO

         EROSION REDUCTION
               on
         NATIONAL FOREST
         TIMBER SALE AREAS




         U.S. FOREST SERVICE
         CALIFORNIA REGION
              1954
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Once the publication is labelled, filing it in its proper slot and pre-
paring and filing cross-reference cards or sheets is a clerical task.
In fact a clerk will do this job a lot more efficiently than a buttery
fingered technician. The sheets would look like this:

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                 46.  EROSION CONTROL        │
│  See also:                                   │
│                                              │
│     26.  Logging and engineering             │
│                                              │
│     "A guide to erosion reduction            │
│     on national forest timber sale           │
│     areas"                                    │
│                                              │
│                                              │
│                                              │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘


┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│              34.  CULTURAL PRACTICES         │
│  See also:                                   │
│                                              │
│     26.  Logging and engineering             │
│                                              │
│     "A guide to erosion reduction            │
│     on national forest timber sale           │
│     areas"  pp.  52 and 53                    │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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EXPANDING the classification system is not to be undertaken lightly; if encouraged, it tends to get out of hand. Usually simplicity will best be preserved merely by being orderly; for example by filing pamphlets within a second-order group alphabetically by title. If publications are numerous or a job is very important, third order headings may be desired. Then use as few subdivisions as possible to cover the field, and continue the numbersystem used for this classification. Here's an example of how the forest-fire protection group might be expanded:

61. Forest fires

    61.1 Fire weather and fire-danger rating

    61.2 Fire behavior

    61.3 Fire damages and benefits

    61.4 Prevention

    61.5 Control, principles and equipment

    61.6 Salvage

IS IT USEFUL?

If this is a perfect system for classifying forest library materials, it is the only one in existence. It has some obvious weaknesses--for example, recreation and wildlife management are given very broad treatment. But if the idea of a "simplified classification system . . to . . maintain a usable library" has any virtue, it ought to be given the acid test. A fair trial, suggestions for improvement, and then revision, seem the next order of business.

Meanwhile the California Station will attach a tag to each bundle of Station releases distributed to forests, suggesting the reference number and any obvious cross reference numbers. If the system works, the Station can imprint the numbers so they will be/a permanent part of each release. Give it a whirl!

C.M. WALKER, Editor
California Forest and Range Experiment Station

A CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM FOR NATIONAL-FOREST STAFF LIBRARIES

1. General

    11. Site factors (climate, topography, soil, etc.)
    12. Botany and plant ecology
    13. Zoology and animal ecology
    14. Annual reports
    15. Education and training
    16. Administration & research

2. Forest Management

    21. Forest types, tree species, and tree improvement
    22. Working plans and regulation of yield
    23. Cutting methods
    24. Regeneration, natural and artificial
    25. Stand improvement
    26. Logging and engineering
    27. Business aspects: finance and valuation
    28. Mensuration

3. Range Management

    31. Range plants
    32. Range character, condition, and trend
    33. Management of livestock ranges
    34. Cultural practices (reseeding, water spreading, etc.)
    35. Management of livestock
    36. Management of big-game ranges
    37. Range study methods and techniques

4. Watershed Management

    41. Water supply and development
    42. Watershed conditions
    43. Floods and flood damage
    44. Water-yield improvment (quantity and quality)
    45. Streamflow regulation (timing and rate)
    46. Erosion control (including sediment in reservoirs)
    47. Measurement, instruments and techniques

5. Recreation and wildlife management

    51. Recreation areas and use
    52. Fish and game
    53. Habitat improvement
    54. Physical improvements

6. Protection

   61. Forest Fires
   62. Tree diseases and wood rots
   63. Insects
   64. Rodents and other animals
   65. Chemical, mechanical, and climatic injuries.

7. Forest Products

   71. Wood identification and properties
   72. Lumber
   73. Veneer and plywood
   74. Laminated and modified wood
   75. Pulp, paper, fiberboard, and chemical uses
   76. Poles, piling, and other (shingles, cooperage, etc.)
   77. Construction, finishing, and preservation
   78. Marketing: supply, demand, and prices

8. Economics and Policy

   81. Natural resources statistics and situation
   82. Land use and ownership
   83. Policy and programs
   84. Legislation
   85. Taxation, credit, and insurance
   86. History and status of management